MEMBERS' HANDBOOK

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Legislative Assembly of British Columbia

MEMBERS' HANDBOOK

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INTRODUCTION

This handbook is intended to provide information for Members of the Legislative Assembly in relation to parliamentary practice, pay and allowances, members' services generally and a short description of various legislative offices and facilities which function primarily to assist members in carrying out their duties in the assembly.

It must be emphasized that this handbook is not to be considered a definitive authority, but simply a guideline, and members are encouraged to consult the relevant statutes, orders-in-council and resource personnel in cases of uncertainty.

Initial inquiries in relation to pay and allowances may be made to the Legislative Comptroller (356-8586) and inquiries in relation to procedural matters may be made to the Office of the Clerk of the House (387-3785). Please address all request for changes to the Members' Handbook to the Clerk of Committees (356-2933).

This edition does not include Members' Biographies as in the past. Members' Biographies can be accessed on the Legislative Assembly website at www.legis.gov.bc.ca.

E. George MacMinn, Q.C.
February 2002

OATH OF ALLEGIANCE

Every Member of the Legislative Assembly is required by Section 24 of the *Constitution Act* to take and subscribe to an oath of allegiance, as follows:

> *I, _____, swear that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, [or her successor], her heirs and successors, according to law.*
> *So help me God.*

A member who conscientiously declines the taking of an oath may make a solemn affirmation or declaration instead. (S.24(2))

The Clerk of the Legislative Assembly administers the oath of allegiance to duly elected members after the return of the writs. Members are also required to sign the parliamentary roll before taking their seats in the House.

THE SPEAKER

The Speaker has procedural, administrative and ceremonial roles. In the Legislature, the Speaker presides over debates, maintains order and ensures that Members abide by the Standing Orders which govern conduct and procedures in the House. The Speaker also serves as the President of the British Columbia Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. Administratively, through the Clerk of the House, the Speaker is responsible for providing services to MLA's and overseeing the day-to-day operations of the Parliament Buildings.

The Speaker is elected by the other Members of the Legislative Assembly. The election of the Speaker is conducted in the Legislative Chamber and is presided over by the Clerk of the House.

To enable the Speaker to act with complete impartiality, the Speaker does not participate in debate or engage in partisan activities.

The Office of the Speaker is responsible for the management of the Speaker's budget and provides information to Members and staff, the media and general public on a wide range of issues and concerns. The office also coordinates protocol duties required of the Speaker and/or Members for visiting delegations, official visitors and Consular representatives from other jurisdictions.

SPEAKER'S PROCESSION

Each daily sitting begins with the entrance into the chamber of the Speaker, preceded by the Sergeant-at-Arms and followed by the Clerks. Five minutes prior to sitting time, the Sergeant-at-Arms rings the division bells, calling the members into the assembly.

All members and observers in the galleries rise upon the entrance of the Speaker's procession. The Sergeant-at-Arms carries the Mace and places it upon the Table. The Mace is the symbol of the authority of the House and, through the House, of the Speaker. When it is in place, the House is duly authorized to function and proceedings can begin.

The Speaker, dressed in a black robe and tricorn hat, opens the sitting with prayers, after which all members take their seats.

THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The Clerk is the chief permanent officer of the Legislative Assembly and is responsible for:

1. Maintaining the records of all parliamentary business conducted, and for the custody of all parliamentary papers;
2. Providing assistance and advice on parliamentary procedure to the Speaker and all members of the House;
3. Management and administrative services within the Assembly;
4. Coordinating the business of the Assembly;

5. Preparing Orders of the Day and Votes and Proceedings and supervising the production of the Journals of the House;
6. Various other duties imposed by statute;
7. Advising on protocol arrangements for legislative functions and ceremonies, parliamentary visits and is secretary of the British Columbia branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association;
8. Presiding over the election of the Speaker;
9. Acting as Disclosure Clerk pursuant to the *Financial Disclosure Act*.

The Office of the Clerk may be consulted at any time regarding procedural and House matters (387-3785).

The Clerk of the House, E. George MacMinn, Q.C., is assisted in his duties by the other Table Officers:

Robert Vaive, Clerk Assistant
Ian D. Izard, Law Clerk and Clerk Assistant
Craig H. James, Clerk of Committees and Clerk Assistant

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS

The appointment of Sergeant-at-Arms has its origins in early English parliamentary history. By tradition, the Sergeant-at-Arms sits beside the Bar of the House, at the main entrance. Today the functions are associated with the ceremony of Parliament, the preservation of order and enforcing the orders emanating from the Chair. Some of the duties performed by the Sergeant-at-Arms in British Columbia include: custody of the Mace and the furnishings of the chamber; attendance in the chamber while the House is sitting, by himself or his deputies; management of security within the legislative precinct; supervision of the chamber attendants, pages, doorkeepers, gallery staff and legislative security officers; mail and supplies distribution, and other administrative functions required by the Speaker or by the House.

The Sergeant-at-Arms may take into custody, upon the direction of the Speaker, any strangers or members who misconduct themselves in the galleries or the House.

The Sergeant-at-Arms is Anthony A. Humphreys, who is assisted by the Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms, David V. Adamthwaite, and the Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms (Security), R. Brian Harlow.

THE STANDING ORDERS

The Legislative Assembly of British Columbia is governed by a system of rules, practices and traditions, many of which were adopted from the United Kingdom Parliament at Westminster. The majority of those rules are contained in the Standing Orders.

The primary purpose of parliamentary procedure is to expedite the business of the Assembly while ensuring the right of all members to participate in the parliamentary process. The standard authorities on parliamentary practice as applied in British Columbia, such as Sir Erskine May's *Parliamentary Practice* and MacMinn's *Parliamentary Practice in British Columbia,* Third Edition, are available in the Legislative Library and in the Chamber. All members are entitled to a copy of *Parliamentary Practice in British Columbia,* which can be obtained from the Clerk's office.

OPENING OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

By a proclamation of the Lieutenant Governor, upon the advice of executive council, the Members of the Legislative Assembly are summoned to meet. After a general election, one of the first acts the Legislative Assembly must perform is the election of one of its members as Speaker. Once the Speaker is chosen, the Lieutenant Governor reads the Speech from the Throne. The reasons for summoning the Legislative Assembly and the broad outline of the executive's proposed legislation are contained in the Speech from the Throne.

ADDRESS IN REPLY

After the Speech from the Throne, a motion is moved and seconded thanking the Lieutenant Governor for the presentation of the speech. The ensuing debate, called the Address in Reply, does not exceed six sitting days. It is an opportunity for all members of the House to debate the issues raised in the Speech from the Throne.

BUDGET DEBATE

During the spring session of the Legislature, the Minister of Finance tables the estimates for the forthcoming fiscal year. On the same day, the Minister presents the Budget Address, which is an overview of the financial position of the province and a presentation of the government's financial policies and programs for the next fiscal year. The minister concludes by moving "That the Speaker do now leave the chair for the House to go into Committee of Supply." The debate in the House on this motion is called the Budget Debate, which lasts a maximum of six sitting days and at least eight sittings.

This is a general debate, similar to the Address in Reply, and focuses on the financial policies and programs of the government. At the conclusion of the debate, the Assembly resolves itself into the Committee of Supply in order to consider the estimates.

During the estimates process, members of the House have an opportunity to question each minister on his or her departmental spending record for the past year and the spending proposals for the ensuing fiscal year.

INTERIM SUPPLY

When all estimates have not been passed by the Legislative Assembly before the end of the fiscal year (which is March 31), an interim supply bill is introduced in the assembly in order for the government to meet its financial commitments. This bill grants a proportion of the budget as a temporary measure until the full estimates have been approved. The passage of an interim supply

bill does not preclude the Members of the Legislative Assembly from questioning any part of the estimates or from moving motions to reduce any specific vote. There may be one or more interim supply acts.

SUPPLY BILL

Once the Committee of Supply has completed its review of the estimates, the Minister of Finance will present a *Supply Act* to authorize the Budget expenditure. (See Practice Recommendation No. 10 in the Standing Orders.)

NOTICE

In order that members can be fully prepared when matters are called for debate in the House, two days' notice is required for important House business (e.g., motions) but may be waived by unanimous consent.

The Standing Orders of the Assembly require two days' notice to be given:

1. To present a bill, resolution or address but not a message bill.
2. For the appointment of any committee.
3. For the suspension of the Standing Orders.

Standing Order 48, which governs the notice provisions, does not apply to bills after their introduction, or to private bills, or to the times of the meeting or adjournment of the House, or to a motion to proceed to Orders of the Day. When notice is required, it must be laid on the Table before adjournment and be printed in the Votes and Proceedings of that day.

A member gives notice of a motion or question by handing to the Table a signed and dated "Notice of Question" or "Notice of Motion" form containing the text of the question or motion. The forms are available at the Table in the chamber and from the Office of the Clerk. Notices are accepted at the Table only while the House is sitting.

BILLS

The Assembly legislates by way of acts which begin as bills. Bills are one of three types: government bills, members' bills or private bills.

Government bill — Government bills, which reflect the policy of the government, are introduced by a Minister of the Crown and may originate in a government department. They may create a new act, amend or repeal an existing act or consolidate provisions of various acts. In British Columbia, government bills are invariably introduced on message containing a Crown recommendation from the Lieutenant Governor. The Crown recommendation and message are required under the *Constitution Act* in matters involving appropriation of public funds and taxation. A message may be used for other purposes and is receivable at any time without notice. Numbers 1 – 199 are reserved for government bills.

Members' bill — Members' bills are similar to government bills, although introduced by a private member who is either a backbencher or a member of the opposition.

Limitations exist on the content of members' bills in that they cannot create an offence, impose a penalty, alter the constitution, propose expenditure or an obligation on the Crown, etc., as these areas are reserved for government bills. Introduction of a member's bill requires two days' notice, and the numbers M 200 – M 399 are reserved for members' bills. A private member cannot obtain a message from the Lieutenant Governor.

Private bill — Private bills are applied for on petition by an individual(s), an association, company or other group, for a legislative enactment which is an exception to the general law. The application is made by way of petition sponsored by a member of the House and must be advertised to afford affected parties an opportunity to contest the application where appropriate. Because of the unique nature of a private bill in conferring benefits on a limited group it cannot proceed to second reading

until the Private Bills Committee has approved the rationale for the bill. Examples of private acts include an act which would grant expropriation powers to a utility company for right-of-way, and the *Vancouver Charter* which incorporated the City of Vancouver prior to the passage of the *Municipal Act*. The applicant must pay a fee of $500 and pay for printing of the bill as well as advertising. The numbers Pr 400 – Pr 500 are reserved for private bills. Once approved by the Private Bills Committee, a private bill is dealt with in the same fashion as a government or member's bill.

The passage of a bill into law — A bill, when considered by the assembly, must pass through a number of stages to become law. The sequence and passage of a bill is as follows:

Introduction and first reading — A bill is introduced either "on message" or following two days' notice on the order paper. The member having conduct of the bill introduces the bill and moves that it be read a first time. No debate is allowed and a vote is taken, although invariably introduction is a formality. The member having conduct of the bill is permitted to make a two-minute statement outlining the purpose and intent of the bill. A second motion is then moved that the bill be placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading. When introduced, government bills are authorized for release by the Law Clerk. Members' bills are submitted at the time of introduction and distributed following printing.

Second reading — When a bill is called for second reading, the member having conduct of the bill moves that it be read a second time now and a debate then ensues on the principle of the bill. Dilatory delay motions may be moved, such as the stylized "six-month hoist", and the member who moves the motion has a right of reply after all other members have spoken in debate. When the vote passes for second reading, the bill is then referred to a committee (usually the Committee of the Whole), for consideration on a later day.

Committee stage — During the committee stage, the bill is considered clause by clause with a separate vote being taken on each clause, any schedules, any preamble and the title. It is at the committee stage that amendments may be moved.

It is not obligatory that notice of amendments be given on the Order Paper but it is both a courtesy to other members and a convenience which expedites understanding of the amendment before the committee. When a section is under consideration the amendments are moved by the party proposing them, and the question is called on the amendment before the question on the (amended) section is called. When all of the contents of the bill have been approved with or without amendment, the Chair of the committee is authorized to report the bill back to the House. The principal of the bill, having been approved at second reading, is not re-canvassed in committee.

Report stage — When a bill has been amended, the Law Clerk arranges for reprinting of the amended version by Legislative Counsel and the Queen's Printer. Standing Order 80 requires that the bill be reprinted with the amendments before it is read a third time. A red-lining technique is used to show portions of the bill deleted or added.

Third reading — Where a bill is not amended, it is customarily called for third reading immediately after the report of the committee is received. If the bill has been amended, unanimous consent would be required to proceed to third reading prior to reprinting. The third reading stage is commenced with a motion by the member having conduct of the bill and completed by a vote on the motion. When the bill has been read a third time the Speaker pronounces that it "is an Act".

Royal Assent — An act of the Legislative Assembly does not become law until it has received Royal Assent by the Lieutenant Governor. Royal Assent is given in the Chamber with the titles to acts being read out by the Law Clerk and Royal Assent pronounced by the Clerk of the House.

A law comes into effect — Although an act has received Royal Assent, it is necessary to examine its content to determine when it comes into effect. If the bill is silent on the date of commencement, it comes into effect on the date of Royal Assent. If the bill contains a date on which it comes into effect, even if retroactive, it comes into effect on that date. If a bill contains a provision that allows it to come into effect on a date to be fixed by regulation of the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council, it comes into effect on the date fixed by regulation.

FORM OF PROCEEDINGS

The text of the motions to be moved by a member having conduct of a bill is contained in Appendix G of *Parliamentary Practice in British Columbia,* and is available from the Office of the Clerk.

MOTIONS

A motion is a proposal made by a member, subject to the Standing Orders, that the assembly do something, or order something to be done, or express an opinion. Once a motion has been moved, submitted in writing to the Chair and found to be in order, it may be, subject to the Standing Orders, debated, amended, adopted, negatived or withdrawn, as the assembly may decide. Every motion, once adopted, assumes the form of either an "order" or a "resolution" of the assembly.

PETITIONS

A fundamental concept of parliamentary democracy is the right of the public to have access to parliament by way of petition. A petition can be from an individual or group and can relate to the passage of a bill or the government's consideration of an important public issue.

Since the Legislative Assembly is a representative institution, it considers only those matters submitted to it by its members, and petitions are no exception.

The form of petition is prescribed by the *Standing Orders:*

To the Honourable the Legislative Assembly of the Province of British Columbia, in Legislature Assembled:

The petition of the undersigned, [*name of person or group seeking redress*] of the [*city, town or area*], states that: [*here state the object of the petition, briefly setting forth the reasons therefor*].

Your petitioners respectfully request that the Honourable House [*take such action as may be deemed appropriate*]. Dated _____ day of _____, 20___ .

(Signatures)

Members of the Legislative Assembly are accountable for the content of a petition.

ORAL QUESTIONS

The Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly provide for a 15-minute oral question period at the beginning of each of four sitting days per week (See Standing Order 47A). The rules and practices governing question period are set out in *Parliamentary Practice in British Columbia,* Third Edition, pp. 107 – 112.

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Another means by which a member can obtain information from the government is through the use of written questions which call for written replies. Two days' notice is required to place a question on the Order Paper. Written questions seek information from ministers of the Crown relating to current issues within their mandate.

PUBLIC WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Written questions may be submitted by persons elected to head provincial or local public bodies designated under this order and in accordance with the guidelines

established by Mr. Speaker. Questions submitted in writing to the Office of the Speaker by 4:00 p.m. Wednesday are eligible to be drawn on Thursday. Five questions drawn by the Speaker which conform to the guidelines shall be placed on the Orders of the Day on Monday of each week. A question shall be printed on 2 consecutive weeks unless answered.

A Private Member may ask a qualified question of a Minister during Question Period. The Member from whose constituency the question comes will have first refusal to put such question to the appropriate Minister. The Minister may answer the question orally or in writing by filing with the Clerk of the House. Written answers shall be published in the Votes and Proceedings.

Questions should relate to current provincial issues and public affairs, be timely, brief and stated without argument or opinion. The submission must not include unparliamentary language and shall be directed to the Minister who has responsibility for the area of interest.

DECORUM IN THE ASSEMBLY

Not all of the standard practices of the Legislative Assembly are contained in the formal rules of procedure, known as the Standing Orders. Some are customs and usage.

1. Members must be attired in appropriate dress.
2. Members may speak only from their own desk; they must rise and address themselves to the Speaker.
3. When the Speaker is standing or is putting a question, no member may enter, walk out of or across the assembly or make any noise or disturbance.
4. A member must not pass between a member speaking and the Chair.
5. A member must not pass between the Chair and the Mace.
6. It is customary to bow to the Chair when leaving or returning to one's desk or the chamber.

7. When it is necessary for a member to confer with a member on the opposite side of the House, the member may have a Page convey a message to the intended member. Members are expected to confer quietly while in the chamber. It is the practice to bow to the Chair when passing the central point behind the bar.
8. When the Assembly adjourns, members shall keep their seats until the Speaker's procession has left the chamber.
9. Smoking is not permitted in the Legislative Assembly chamber.
10. No food or drink is permitted in the chamber.
11. A member signifies a request for the services of a Page by raising his or her hand.
12. Persons other than Members, Officers of the House and chamber attendants are not allowed on the floor of the Assembly without the express permission of the Speaker.
13. Electronic and photographic equipment cannot be brought into the chamber without the approval of the Speaker.

DECORUM IN THE GALLERIES

It is the duty of the staff under the direction of the Sergeant-at-Arms to maintain order in the galleries. Visitors are not permitted to carry with them briefcases or packages. Visitors are not permitted to smoke, to make notes or tape recordings or to take pictures of the Assembly in session.

RULES OF DEBATE

A member, while speaking in the assembly, must not:

1. Refer to any debate in the same session on any question not then under discussion;
2. Refer to any matter on which a judicial decision is pending;
3. Anticipate discussion on a motion set down for future consideration;

4. Refer to any member by name (a member should be referred to as "the member for [name of the constituency]");
5. Make a personal charge against a member;
6. Use their right of speech for the purpose of obstructing the business of the House;
7. Reflect upon the past acts and proceedings of the House;
8. Read a prepared speech;
9. Denigrate the Crown or Her Majesty's representatives;
10. Use unparliamentary language.

DECORUM IN COMMITTEES OF THE WHOLE

When the assembly resolves itself into a Committee of the Whole for bills or supply, the Speaker leaves the chair, the Mace is lowered to a position beneath the Table, and the Chairperson presides over the committee from the Table. The Standing Orders of the House are applicable in committee, with the exception that members can speak more than once to a question in a committee.

ADJOURNMENT, PROROGATION AND DISSOLUTION

The daily meeting of the Assembly is called a "sitting," and the sitting is concluded by the "adjournment" of the House. All business not concluded at the time of adjournment stands over until the following sitting. The annual meetings are composed of one or more sessions. A session is composed of a number of sittings and is concluded by "prorogation" or adjournment at the call of the Chair. Upon the conclusion of the session's business, the Lieutenant Governor declares that the session is prorogued. Any business not completed before prorogation dies on the Order Paper.

The period of time between general elections is called a "parliament." A session may be described as the "first session of the thirty-seventh parliament." This means that there have been thirty-six general elections since the establishment of the province. A parliament is concluded by "dissolution." Again, a proclamation of the Lieutenant Governor is required to dissolve the Legislative Assembly (parliament). Upon dissolution, members cease to be Members of the Legislative Assembly and all committees and all business of the Assembly dies. Dissolution is followed by the calling of a general election to elect a new Legislative Assembly and the parliamentary cycle begins once more.

PARLIAMENTARY PUBLICATIONS

PUBLICATION OF ACTS

Acts of the Legislative Assembly are published each year in print and electronic form. A consolidated version of the Revised Statutes of British Columbia is updated annually and available in loose-leaf form. From time to time, most recently in 1996, all of the public acts were revised and republished with a consolidation of the *Vancouver Charter*. Printed acts are obtained from Crown Publications.

ELECTRONIC STATUTES

Beginning with the 1992 legislative year, by arrangement between the Law Clerk, Legislative Counsel and the Queen's Printer, the Consolidated Statutes of British Columbia loose-leaf edition has been reproduced in electronic form with high-speed searching software so that it can be accessed on a personal computer either on a CD-ROM or a hard drive. It is available on the Legislative Assembly network core server.

ELECTRONIC DOCUMENTS

The Office of the Clerk, with the assistance of the Queen's Printer, operates a Website for official publications. *Bills, Orders of the Day, Votes and Proceedings, Hansard and Committee Proceedings* and its indexes are available on the Internet. Legislative documents are also stored in the "Leginfo" directory of the Legislative Assembly network on the core server and can be accessed using a personal computer.

Internet access to official publications is available at the following Internet address:

http://www.legis.gov.bc.ca/

The following Folio infobases (files) are available on the core server under the "/Leginfo/folio" directory:

1. Statutes and related material, where applicable, such as Historical Tables, Table of Legislative Changes, Supplements, and Rules of Court and Related Enactments
2. *Hansard* debates for the 35th and 36th Parliament.
3. Government Telephone Directory.
4. Members' handbook
5. Federal Statutes

ORDERS OF THE DAY

The Order Paper is the official agenda of the House. Published by the Office of the Clerk for each sitting day, the Order Paper provides a comprehensive overview of the status of business before the Legislature. Its listings include the status of legislation, debates, motions and resolutions, as well as written questions directed to ministers.

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

The Votes and Proceedings are minutes of the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly and are the record of any matters considered by the House and of any deci-

sions taken by the House. The Votes and Proceedings record all motions moved in the House; the proceedings in Committees of the Whole House, including the Committee of Supply; the introduction of and proceedings on all bills, petitions, sessional papers and committee reports presented to the House; messages from the Lieutenant Governor; statements and rulings of the Speaker; the names of the members voting on each side of a question when a recorded vote is requested; the written questions which the government has answered; and the times of the meeting and adjournment of the House.

The status of legislation is appended to the Votes and Proceedings. This section records all the bills introduced in the current session, the bill numbers and titles, the names of sponsors and the progress to date (i.e., date of first, second and third readings, referral to committee and date of royal assent).

The Votes and Proceedings are published by the Office of the Clerk and are available in the morning of the day following every day on which the House meets. A copy of the Votes and Proceedings is also delivered to the desk of every member in the legislative chamber.

The Votes and Proceedings are a provisional record of the proceedings of the House and are edited, indexed and bound at the end of each session and issued as the Journals. The Journals are the formal and permanent record of the proceedings of the House.

HANSARD SERVICES

Hansard is the full and essentially verbatim record of speeches in the Legislature. Editorial guidelines for the report are as follows:

> "This is a full report, in the first person, of all speakers alike, which, though not strictly verbatim, is substantially the verbatim report, with repetitions and redundancies omitted and with obvious mistakes corrected, but which on the other hand leaves out nothing that adds to the meaning of the speech or illustrates the argument."

Hansard Services functions under the authority of the Speaker of the House.

A *Hansard* report is published for each separate sitting of the House. *Hansard* reports are available on the Internet at the following address:

http://www.legis.gov.bc.ca/hansard/

Click the link "Debates". Printed copies of the *Hansard* report are delivered to the Chamber the morning after a sitting.

A preliminary draft transcript or "Instant" *Hansard*, called the *Blues*, is also produced, primarily for members' use. Internet access to the *Blues* is available at the same internet address. The *Blues* are posted on the Internet in several installments during the course of a sitting. The complete *Blues* for a regular sitting are available about an hour after adjournment. *Blues* for sittings that go long or late may not be complete before the start of the next sitting. A small number of question period *Blues* are printed by Hansard Services and distributed to the chamber.

Members are encouraged to read their speeches in the *Blues* and advise Hansard Services within three hours after the *Blues* have been made available if they believe they have been inaccurately reported. However, corrections must be minimal and confined to clarifying mishearings or other errors in transcription. Members may not polish, improve or otherwise rewrite their speeches.

To assist Hansard Services in the accurate spelling of names, particularly when visitors in the gallery are introduced, a Hansard notepad is located in each member's desk. Sergeant-at-Arms staff or Pages will carry the notes to Hansard Services staff. Any assistance that members and their staff can give Hansard Services staff in ensuring the accuracy of names, titles, technical terms and quotations is greatly appreciated.

Members are encouraged to provide Hansard Services with copies of any material they read out in the House. Pages can pick this material up immediately and bring it

to Hansard Services, ensuring the accuracy of the *Blues*. Materials will be returned as soon as possible, and it should be noted that Hansard Services staff have sworn to keep private information confidential.

COMMITTEES

On request of the committee, meetings of select standing and special committees of the Legislature are recorded and published in a manner similar to that for House proceedings. Transcripts are prepared by Hansard Services staff on a second-priority basis and are usually available to committee members before the next scheduled meeting. Transcripts can be found on the Hansard web site by clicking on the link, "Legislative Committees."

INDEXING

Indexing of the print *Hansard* is done on a sessional basis. A cumulative business-entries index is posted regularly during the session. Most day-to-day queries about who said what on which subject, and when, can be answered through the on-line indexes or an electronic text search by members or their staff, or they may be directed to Hansard Services (387-3681). The indexes and other lists can be found on the Hansard web site by clicking on the link, "Indexes to Debates."

HANSARD IN THE CHAMBER

The Hansard Services operator in the chamber gallery booth controls both the recording of speeches and chamber sound. The operator's responsibility is to:

1. Switch microphones and television cameras from one member to another upon members being recognized by the Chair. Only one member's microphone can be live at one time. When a microphone is live, a red indicator light near the top of the microphone is illuminated.
2. Maintain appropriate sound-volume levels in the chamber.

3. Repeat interjections and House business information into an operator microphone for the benefit of the record. (Only those interjections responded to by the member in possession of the floor are included in the report.)
4. Time speeches according to rules laid out in Standing Orders.
   (a) The operator keys into the sound system computer the appropriate time allotted for a member's speech — e.g., 30 minutes for second reading debate.

   At the commencement of the speech, a white light is activated at both the Speaker's desk and the Clerks' table. At 28 minutes, a green light replaces the white; at 30 minutes (completion of the member's speech time) a red light replaces the green.
   (b) The Hansard Services computer console contains several keys to automatically time speeches of various lengths — e.g., 2, 3, 5, 7, 10, 15, 30, 40 and 120 minutes. However, any time may be entered manually by the operator. A second operator provides computer annotation of the sound files used to produce the transcript.

HANSARD TELEVISION

All proceedings of the House are telecast live throughout the province by satellite, but not those of the Committee of Supply when it sits in the Douglas Fir Room. The broadcasting guidelines ensure that the dignity of the House is respected. The following are the specific rules regulating cameras in the chamber.

Television Guidelines

1. The television reporting of the debates of the Legislature will be accurate, factual and complete and will in no way attempt to editorialize or dramatize the proceedings.

2. All proceedings in the Legislature, from the Speaker's procession until the adjournment of the sitting, will be recorded by the cameras, with the following exceptions:

   (a) Waiting periods leading to divisions;

   (b) Recesses.

   During the above, a wide chamber shot will be maintained with audio reduced to ambient sound. (Full sound will be restored for calling of the division list.)

3. Only the member who has been recognized by the Speaker or Chairperson, or the Speaker or Chairperson, shall be recorded by the television cameras.

4. The camera shot of each member should be framed in a consistently similar manner — approximately from the waist to a point eight to twelve inches above the member's head.

5. Camera shots of the Speaker or Chairperson may vary: a medium chamber shot when members are being recognized; a medium or close-up shot when rulings or points of order are being addressed; possible side camera shots to facilitate smooth camera switching.

6. Split screens, cut-aways or reaction shots will not be permitted.

7. Members speaking will be identified on screen by name with either party affiliation and riding, if a private member, or portfolio, if a member of cabinet. As well, the leaders of the opposition parties will be identified as such.

8. Textual information detailing the business or proceeding in which the House or Committee is engaged will be shown on screen to keep the viewers informed as much as possible, depending on time constraints.

9. Broadcasts of the proceedings may be shown by television stations and/or cable operators live or by means of recordings. The broadcasting of debates is to be done without purposeful distortion.
10. Master tapes of the complete current session will be stored in the television production centre facility. Hansard Services broadcast technicians may provide copies for members and officers of the assembly as time permits.

    However, those wishing to view a videotape of a House sitting, or a portion thereof may do so in the Legislative Library, where viewing facilities and an up-to-date VHS videotape collection for the past two sittings are available. Access to videotapes for prior sessions is in accordance with guideline 12 below.
11. The use of audio-video tapes of the debates of the Legislature is forbidden during any British Columbia provincial election, by-election or any public event of a politically partisan nature.
12. After prorogation of each session, the Speaker shall ensure that the complete audio-visual record of the session is deposited in the British Columbia Archives. Access to these tapes will be in accordance with procedures established by the Office of the Speaker in consultation with the British Columbia Archives.
13. These guidelines shall be enforced by the Speaker. Specific concerns of members regarding the televising of the proceedings shall not be raised in the House. Such concerns should be raised in private with the Speaker.
14. The television guidelines shall stand referred to the Legislative Assembly Management Committee. The Committee may conduct periodic reviews of the televising of legislative proceedings and consider such matters or concerns as may be referred to the Committee by the Speaker or by the House.

15. A breach of these guidelines will be considered a contempt of the House.
16. Live video of House proceedings, audio from meetings in committee rooms, and press conferences are broadcast on the Legislature's internal cable television system on channels 55 (House), 56 (Douglas Fir Room), 57 (Birch Room), 58 (Hemlock Room), 59 (Oak Room), 60 (Legislative Information Channel) and 61 (Press Theatre).

Further information on television coverage can be obtained from the office of the Director of Hansard Services (387-0944).

Television Suggestions

Wearing bright white shirts in the chamber is not recommended, because they are too bright for the camera. As well, please do not wear strong, repetitive patterns. Interaction with the camera can cause an extra rainbow pattern to appear. Instead, please wear bright, primary colours. They show up well on camera. Finally, please do not knock or cover the microphone with your papers.

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES

Parliamentary committees consider matters which are referred to them by the Legislative Assembly. Within its terms of reference, each committee is afforded total independence in its deliberations.

A Special Committee of Selection determines the composition of select standing committees, although additions and substitutions have been made by motion in the House.

The following comprise the list of select standing committees pursuant to Standing Order 68 and, in the case of Legislative Initiatives, by statute:

1. Aboriginal Affairs;
2. Crown Corporations;
3. Education;

4. Finance and Government Services;
5. Health;
6. Parliamentary Reform, Ethical Conduct, Standing Orders and Private Bills;
7. Public Accounts;
8. Legislative Initiatives.

In addition, special committees may be constituted to undertake special tasks, such as the Special Committee on the Response to the Gove Report.

Each committee elects a chairperson and a deputy chairperson; where applicable, observes the Standing Orders of the House; and reports directly to the Legislative Assembly. The committee system allows for more detailed analysis of a matter referred to it than is available in the House or a Committee of the Whole.

For further information on legislative committees, contact Mr. Craig James, Clerk of Committees and Clerk Assistant, Room 224 (250-356-2933 or ClerkComm@leg.bc.ca).

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Management Committee is composed of:

The Speaker (Chairperson)

The Minister (or designate)

Government House Leader (or designate)

Official Opposition House Leader (or designate)

Government Caucus Chairperson (or designate)

Official Opposition Caucus Chairperson (or designate)

One member representing each additional opposition party

One member of the government caucus for each opposition party representative other than the official opposition.

The Committee's powers and duties, derived from the *Legislative Assembly Management Committee Act*, relate to:

(a) policies for the administration of the Legislative Assembly and for the conduct of the Members of the Legislative Assembly;
(b) the provision of security, facilities and services, including allocation within the legislative precinct;
(c) the appointment, supervision and management of staff of the Legislative Assembly, other than permanent officers of the Legislative Assembly;
(d) review of estimates of expenditure for the Legislative Assembly under vote 1, including the preparation of forecasts and analyses of expenditures and commitments of the Legislative Assembly;
(e) payments to Members of the Legislative Assembly to defray expenses in the performance of their duties;
(f) payments or services to members for constituency offices, including payments or services for staffing, maintaining the offices, communication expenses and travel expenses; and
(g) other matters necessary for the efficient and effective operation and management of the Legislative Assembly.

MEMBERS' SERVICES

Listed below is an outline of Members' Services within the Legislative Assembly. For further clarification on any of these items, please contact the Office of the Legislative Comptroller (356-8586).

OFFICE ACCOMMODATION AND EQUIPMENT

Each member is provided with an office in the Parliament Buildings. Office furniture is supplied by the British Columbia Buildings Corporation on the instructions of the Speaker, and standard office equipment is provided by the Legislative Assembly.

COMMITTEE ROOMS

Legislative committee rooms are managed by the Sergeant-at-Arms staff and may be reserved by telephoning 387-0952.

COURIER SERVICES

The Sergeant-at-Arms staff are responsible for receipt and dispatch of courier items, and security screening of incoming courier items. Telephone 356-8236 for assistance. Courier companies' staff are not permitted within the Parliament Buildings.

STATIONERY AND SUPPLIES

Members' personalized letterhead, envelopes and business cards, in reasonable quantities, are provided by the Legislative Assembly. No party affiliation is permitted to appear on legislative stationery. If desired, stationery for caucus staff may be provided by caucus. The Sergeant-at-Arms supply office (387-0955) provides members' legislative offices with standard consumable office supplies. Other non-generic material or personal-preference items may be provided by caucus budgets. Stationery and supplies for use in a constituency office must be provided by the member's constituency office allowance.

OFFICE MAIL

Members' personally addressed mail is paid for by the Legislative Assembly. Members may not print or mail at assembly expense any material of a political or partisan nature, or material using mailing lists.

TELEPHONE AND FACSIMILES

Members have access to the provincial government telephone network (PROVNET) from their legislative offices. In the constituency office, the assembly will pay for the installation and rental of one PROVNET voice line per

MLA for outgoing long-distance calls and one PROVNET facsimile line per MLA. The assembly will also provide one dedicated data (ISA) line per member for connectivity to the Legislative Assembly's local area network. Please contact the Office of the Legislative Comptroller to arrange installation of these lines.

The Legislative Assembly will reimburse each Member for the monthly charges associated with a cellular telephone and any legislative business-related calls incurred when the MLA submits the record of calls to the Legislative Comptroller's Office. Members are also issued long-distance calling cards for placing legislative business-related third-party calls. Members are reminded that an additional charge is incurred with the use of the card.

CAUCUS STAFF

Each party caucus determines their own staffing requirements within their annual global budget allocation and is responsible for establishing terms and conditions of employment for their staff.

LEGISLATIVE DINING ROOM

The Legislative Dining Room operates when the House is in session, primarily to serve members and legislative officers and their guests. Caucus and legislative staff, members of the press gallery and others may also use the facilities. Reservation privileges, however, are available to members only, who are encouraged to make reservations before noon in order to guarantee seating during the peak lunch-hour period.

Sessional Hours of Operation

Monday	09:30 – 16:00
Tuesday	09:30 – 16:00
Wednesday	09:30 – 16:00
Thursday	09:30 – 16:00
Friday	09:30 – 14:30

Members may pay in cash for their dining room charges or have them deducted monthly from their indemnity cheques.

PARKING

Each member is designated one parking space adjacent to the building. The Sergeant-at-Arms office administers the members' parking, under the authority of the Speaker.

MEMBERS' LOUNGE

The Members' Lounge, known as the Ned DeBeck Lounge, exists to assist Members of the Legislative Assembly in performing their duties by providing a comfortable, private, informal area in which to relax, meet other members, or receive guests. Located in Room 357 on the third floor of the Library Wing of the Parliament Buildings, it is named after the late Mr. Ned DeBeck, Q.C., Clerk of the Legislative Assembly from 1949 to 1973.

The lounge is kept ready for MLAs' use at all times. Members may use it for any official or private purpose, so long as other members are not excluded or inconvenienced. The division bells from the House will ring in the lounge. The lounge is comfortably furnished and has a telephone (387-3064), a large-screen television set which will receive all cable channels including the House channel, a VCR machine, and a piano. In order to preserve MLAs' privacy, members of the Legislative Press Gallery and other news media representatives are excluded from the members' Lounge.

The lounge is administered by the Sergeant-at-Arms on behalf of the Speaker. The Sergeant-at-Arms can advise members on the arrangements for using the Lounge for special functions.

HANSARD AND SESSIONAL PAPERS

Each member receives a bound copy of the Journals and Official Report of Debates *(Hansard)* of the Assembly from their date of election. Cabinet ministers receive an extra copy for their ministerial offices. The extra copies are the permanent property of the Legislature. Each

member is also allowed a maximum of 15 complimentary subscriptions of *Hansard*. It is the responsibility of the member to provide the Office of the Legislative Comptroller with a master list of the individuals they wish to receive *Hansard* and to keep the office informed of any changes to the list.

PARLIAMENTARY PRACTICE MANUAL

Each member is entitled to receive a bound copy of MacMinn's *Parliamentary Practice in British Columbia,* which may be obtained from the Office of the Clerk of the House.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Members may have their picture taken by the photographer who normally provides photographic services for the Members of the Legislative Assembly or by another photographer of their choice. The maximum allowance is 75 prints developed from the original per fiscal year. The cost is paid for by the Assembly.

NEWSPAPERS

Copies of the major urban newspapers are delivered daily to private members' offices when the House is in session. The cost of these newspapers is covered by the Assembly. Newspaper subscriptions for ministers' offices are paid by the respective ministries.

TOUR PROGRAM

Members may reserve group tours of the building through the tour office at 387-3046. This office coordinates the allocation for schools and group visits to the public galleries as well as a meeting with their MLA.

GALLERIES

Reservations for admission to the members' and Speaker's galleries are made through the Sergeant-at-Arms Office at 387-0952.

SECURITY

The Sergeant-at-Arms is responsible for security in the Parliament Buildings and grounds. The security office near the main door is staffed 24 hours a day. For further information regarding the security service, contact the security desk at 387-5516 or the Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms (Security) 387-1622. The number to call in emergencies is 387-5555.

RECORDS MANAGEMENT AND ARCHIVAL SERVICES

The British Columbia Archives and Records Service offers to all MLAs off-site storage for non-government records, including personal, political and constituency records, for up to five years after the date of retirement from the Legislature. Assistance with the various management services is available by contacting the Manager, Advisory and Training Services, British Columbia Archives and Records Service (387-4128).

NON-SMOKING POLICY

The Speaker has designated all indoor areas of the legislative precinct as non-smoking.

LEGISLATIVE COMPTROLLER

The Legislative Comptroller is the Senior Financial Officer of the Legislative Assembly. The Comptroller is responsible for directly advising the Clerk Assistant, the Clerk of the House, the Speaker, and members of the Legislative Assembly Management Committee regarding all matters of a financial nature, including the financial implications of planning and operational decisions. All managers of the Assembly are subject to functional direction and guidance from the Comptroller in matters related to management and control of the Assembly's system of financial administration.

The Comptroller plans, develops, directs, and evaluates the Assembly's financial and accounting programs and systems, including policy development, planning, budget preparation, revenue and expenditure control, asset control, contract administration, payroll and time keeping systems and financial reporting. The Comptroller oversees development of financial policies, systems and manuals regarding expenditure control, budget preparation, cash forecasts, accounts classification and coding, cost analysis, and accounting and payroll/leave procedures as they are applied to the Assembly. Responsibilities include continually evaluating the effectiveness of financial policies, systems and procedures.

A unique responsibility of the Comptroller is management of financial expenditures, payroll and leave not only for Assembly staff but also for Members and caucus and constituency staff. The Comptroller verifies that payments are legal charges against allotments approved by the Legislative Assembly Management Committee and/or Speaker, and are authorized in accordance with financial signing authorities. There are often differing views regarding allowances and expenditures, as Members may not accept the interpretation of regulations or guidelines. These differences are resolved by the Comptroller, who acts in an advisory role to all Members and advises the Speaker and the Clerk of the House of any situation that could adversely affect any Member of the Assembly.

INDEMNITIES AND ALLOWANCES

ANNUAL INDEMNITY

(Effective April 1, 2001, paid bi-weekly and if requested, by direct deposit.)

Basic Compensation ..... per member $72,100.00

Notes: (1) Members' basic compensation to be increased April 1 of each year utilizing the formula as described in the Connaghan Report (1992).

(2) Basic compensation for government caucus members has been voluntarily decreased to $68,500 effective April 1, 2002.

SPECIAL ALLOWANCES

Premier	$45,000.00
Ministers with portfolio	39,000.00
Ministers without portfolio	25,000.00
Parliamentary Secretaries	6,000.00
Speaker	39,000.00
Deputy Speaker	19,500.00
Deputy Chairperson, Committee of the Whole	9,000.00
Leader of the Official Opposition	39,000.00
Leader of the Third Party	19,500.00
Government Whip	9,000.00
Deputy Government Whip	6,000.00
Official Opposition House Leader	9,000.00
Third Party House Leader	6,000.00
Official Opposition Whip	9,000.00
Third Party Whip	6,000.00
Government Caucus Chairperson	9,000.00
Official Opposition Caucus Chairperson	9,000.00
Third Party Caucus Chairperson	6,000.00
Chair of Select Standing or Special Committee	6,000.00
Deputy Chair of Select Standing or Special Committees	3,000.00

COMMITTEE ALLOWANCES

Members of Select Standing and Special Committees of the Legislature, when authorized by the Legislative Assembly to sit during a period in which the House is adjourned, may claim for actual and reasonable expenses incurred in the discharge of their committee work. There is no salary for committee work. Contact the Clerk of Committees for details.

CAPITAL CITY ALLOWANCE

The Capital City Allowance is $150.00 per sitting day of the House for members outside the Victoria Capital Regional District who are required to stay overnight in Victoria. Members who reside within the Victoria Capital Regional District and are conducting legislative business and members who return to their constituency overnight are eligible to receive $51.50 per sitting day. During the legislative session, claims for the Capital City Allowance should be submitted to the Comptroller's office on a weekly basis. Members can make their claim by a memorandum identifying the dates and amounts, or completion of the travel claim form.

Normally claims should be for sitting days only. When claiming additional in-session days, either of the following conditions **must** apply:

(1) Members who are required to remain in Victoria overnight on the last sitting day of the week (normally a Thursday or Friday night) due to requirements of the House or by travel necessity may claim the $150 allowance, rather than the $51.50 allowance for the last sitting day; and/or

(2) Members who are required to arrive in Victoria on Sunday night due to requirements of the House or by travel necessity may apply for an additional $150.

Members may claim Capital City Allowance when conducting legislative business in Vancouver during a legislative session. Vancouver is defined as any location within the Greater Vancouver Regional District.

The Capital City Allowance is available to members out-of-session who are conducting legislative business in either Victoria or Vancouver. Members must claim for these out-of-session days as outlined above. Members not staying overnight in Vancouver will claim $51.50. Members staying overnight in Vancouver will claim $51.50 for meals and gratuities, plus actual accommodation costs (supported by receipts). Accommodation

costs do not include meals, in-room movies, bar charges or cleaning of clothing. If a member stays with friends, they may claim $30 in lieu of accommodation charges.

CONSTITUENCY ASSISTANT AND OFFICE ALLOWANCE

Effective February 1, 2002, $7,000.00 per month, or $84,000.00 per fiscal year (plus the employer's share of compulsory payroll deductions) is made available to each member towards the actual operating costs, including staff salaries, of (a) constituency office(s). The allowance can be apportioned towards standard office expenses in a manner best suited to each member, and for office occupancy costs such as heat and light, if these are not included in the lease payments. Further guidance can be obtained from the Legislative Comptroller. The allowance is not to be used for political purposes, members' expenses, supplementing members' allowances, or acquiring an equity in real estate or in a motor vehicle.

Effective August 14, 1996, the Legislative Assembly will purchase and maintain furnishings and equipment for constituency offices. Please contact the Legislative Comptroller for details as to what is included in the standard inventory of furniture. Computers, telephones and printer/fax/photocopy equipment will be provided by the Legislative Assembly.

Leases for members' constituency office(s) should be submitted to the Legislative Comptroller for direct payment to the respective landlords. The full lease costs, including normal occupancy costs such as heat, apportioned amount of property taxes, common area expenses, parking, etc., provided these are stated in the lease, will be paid in addition to the above noted allowances.

The Legislative Assembly provides blanket insurance coverage for each constituency office. This policy will cover fire, theft, vandalism and personal liability (personal injuries sustained by persons visiting a constituency office). Any queries concerning this coverage should be directed to the Legislative Comptroller.

As a convenience to members, the payment of the salary, deductions and preparation of forms can be arranged through the Office of the Legislative Comptroller utilizing the government payroll system. If a member chooses to pay an assistant directly from the constituency office allowance, the person in charge of administering the payment must submit both the employee's and employer's share of the appropriate payroll deductions (employment insurance, Canada Pension and income tax) to the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency and must prepare all necessary documents such as T4 slips. In either case, the constituency assistant is the direct employee of the member and is not an employee of the Legislative Assembly.

Constituency assistants may opt into the Public Service Superannuation Pension Plan by completing an application form. The application form will be forwarded to the Superannuation Commission and deductions will commence when it has been approved. The constituency assistant must be on the government payroll system in order to make application. Please contact the Office of the Legislative Comptroller for details.

All members are required to register as employers with the Workers' Compensation Board and pay the established premiums for coverage for their constituency staff. Members must complete the necessary form, available from the Legislative Comptroller, and submit the form directly to the Board. Members will be advised by the Board as to the amount of premium to be paid and the due date for payment.

Following each general election or by-election, a new member may apply to the Legislative Comptroller for a constituency office equipment allowance of $2,000.00. A returning member may apply for $1,000.00.

Effective January 31, 1995 all equipment and furniture purchased in whole or in part with public funds by MLAs

for use in their constituency office(s) remains the property of the Legislative Assembly. Departing members will be responsible for disposing of all items on their inventory lists (e.g., private sale, auction, transfer to incoming member, etc.) with the proceeds being remitted to the Office of the Legislative Comptroller.

DEDUCTION FOR ABSENCE

A deduction of $300.00 a day is made from a member's annual indemnity allowance for every day beyond ten that he or she is absent from a sitting of the assembly for reasons other than official business, illness, or another reason approved by the Speaker (See Section 10 of the *Legislative Assembly Allowances and Pension Act*). It is also incumbent on the member to keep a record of his or her attendance and to submit this information to the Clerk of the House between the 1st and 15th of January and July of each year.

TRAVEL

TRAVEL CLAIM FORM

When claiming capital city allowance, travel expenses between capital and constituency and business travel, members should complete a Travel Claim Form. It would assist the Legislative Comptroller's office if these forms are fully completed. If expenses are charged on the member's Visa Corporate Travel Card, the details of the expenditure should be recorded in the appropriate portion of the Travel Claim Form. This will allow for easy reconciliation of monthly Visa statements. The itemized hotel bill, car rental agreement, air flight coupon, BC Ferry receipt, etc., along with a copy of the signed charge flimsy, should be attached to the monthly Visa statement

TRAVEL ALLOWANCE BETWEEN CAPITAL AND CONSTITUENCY

Members are permitted 52 return trips per fiscal year when there is only one session during the year. This is increased by eight trips (total 60) when there are two sessions during the year (e.g., spring and fall sessions). In addition, members who hold executive positions in their respective caucuses may claim a further five trips per fiscal year. Members may use these trips for themselves, their spouse or dependants (i.e., children claimed for income tax purposes) or constituency staff as outlined below:

Spouse/ Dependants	up to 52 (or 60) return trips per fiscal year as a claim against the total of 52 (or 60) trips allocated to each member.
Constituency Assistant	each member may designate up to four of the 52 (or 60) trips for use by the constituency assistant in any fiscal year.
Legislative Assistant	each member may designate up to two of the 52 (or 60) trips for use by the legislative assistant in any fiscal year.

Travel allowance is not claimed if a member's constituency is within the capital (Capital Regional District or Greater Vancouver Regional District).

When a member (whose constituency is outside the Capital Regional District of the Greater Vancouver Regional District) initially travels from the member's constituency to Victoria and then has a return trip from Victoria to Vancouver before returning to the member's constituency, the travel cost will be deemed to be an additional constituency to capital trip.

Claims for travel between a constituency and the capital may include private vehicle or public transportation costs to and from airports and airport parking costs. There is no provision for meals, accommodation or other expenses. Use of a private vehicle for these trips or portions thereof may be claimed by a memorandum

submitted to the Legislative Comptroller at rates approved by LAMC ($0.42 per kilometre effective April 1, 2001), but must not exceed equivalent economy air fare. Trips between Vancouver and Victoria may be claimed either as a capital/constituency trip or a business trip. Further guidelines are as follows:

Air travel — The allowance permits use of economy-class air travel only. In ridings or under unusual circumstances where there are no commercial flights available, MLAs may use a charter service.

Air travel insurance — Members are insured under the government air travel insurance plan when travelling on business on commercial aircraft, including limited ground travel to and from the airport.

Disabled members — Travel expenses incurred by personal attendants accompanying physically disabled members may be claimed. (See General travel guidelines No. 12.)

IN-CONSTITUENCY TRAVEL ALLOWANCE

In each fiscal year an allowance for travel within a member's riding is paid quarterly. The annual allowances by riding are as follows:

Urban — $3,190

Burnaby-Edmonds
Burnaby North
Burnaby-Willingdon
Burquitlam
Coquitlam-Maillardville
Delta North
Delta South
Esquimalt-Metchosin
Fort Langley-Aldergrove
Langley
Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows
Nanaimo
New Westminster
North Vancouver-Lonsdale
North Vancouver-Seymour
Saanich South
Surrey-Cloverdale
Surrey-Green Timbers
Surrey-Newton
Surrey-Panorama Ridge
Surrey-Tynehead
Surrey-Whalley
Surrey-White Rock
Vancouver-Burrard
Vancouver-Fraserview
Vancouver-Fairview
Vancouver-Hastings
Vancouver-Kensington
Vancouver-Kingsway
Vancouver-Langara

Oak Bay-Gordon Head
Port Coquitlam-Burke Mountain
Port Moody-Westwood
Richmond Centre
Richmond East
Richmond-Steveston

Semi-Urban — $4,752

Abbotsford-Clayburn
Abbotsford-Mount Lehman
Chilliwack-Kent
Chilliwack-Sumas
Comox Valley
Cowichan-Ladysmith
Kamloops
Kelowna-Lake Country
Kelowna-Mission
Malahat-Juan de Fuca
Maple Ridge-Mission
Nanaimo-Parksville
Okanagan-Vernon
Okanagan-Westside
Penticton-Okanagan Valley
Saanich North & the Islands
Vancouver-Mount Pleasant
Vancouver-Point Grey
Vancouver-Quilchena
Victoria-Beacon Hill
Victoria-Hillside
West Vancouver-Capilano

Rural — $7,125

Cariboo North
Nelson-Creston
Peace River South
Prince George-Mt. Robson
Prince George North
Prince George-Omineca
Shuswap
Yale-Lillooet

Semi-Rural — $6,314

Alberni-Qualicum
East Kootenay
Kamloops-North Thompson
Skeena
West Kootenay-Boundary
West Vancouver-Garibaldi

Coastal/Remote — $8,580

Bulkley Valley-Stikine
Cariboo South
Columbia River-Revelstoke
North Coast
North Island
Peace River North
Powell River-Sunshine Coast

Members who represent coastal/remote ridings are eligible to claim an additional maximum of $8,580 per fiscal year upon submission of receipts for actual personal travel expenses incurred, including accommodation and meals.

Effective November 1, 1993, members' constituency assistants (except those representing urban ridings) are permitted to claim for travel costs incurred while travelling within their ridings. The allowance, based on a maximum of one-third of the allowance provided to members in a fiscal year for each classification of riding, is as follows:

Classification of riding	CA's Annual Allowance
Semi-urban	$1,584
Semi-rural	2,105
Rural	2,375
Coastal/Remote	2,860

This allowance is intended to cover normal travel expenses, such as mileage, taxis, hotels, meals, etc., incurred by constituency assistants while travelling within the riding in the usual performance of their duties. The current mileage rate for the use of private vehicles on official business is $0.42 per kilometre (effective April 1, 2001). Claims should be prepared in memo format, providing some brief details of the dates, type of expenses, destinations, etc., and signed by the constituency assistant and the member before forwarding to the Legislative Comptroller for reimbursement. It is not necessary to submit receipts but they must be retained in the constituency office files for record and audit purposes. If the constituency assistant should accompany the member on a trip, separate receipts or similar documentation should be obtained to ensure accurate records and avoid confusion over to whom the expenses relate.

BUSINESS TRAVEL

Members are permitted to claim actual and reasonable expenses for up to eight trips between their constituency and any other location in British Columbia on business related to their roles as an MLA. Additionally, the Leader of the Official Opposition shall be entitled to claim unlimited business travel within the province. Members

may claim trips between Victoria and Vancouver as either business travel or as capital/constituency travel.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL — AUTHORIZED TRAVEL

Under certain conditions specified in the *Legislative Assembly Allowances and Pension Act,* members who have received prior written approval from the Speaker or the Executive Council to act in accordance with the relevant section of the Act or who are parliamentary secretaries or members of various designated entities may claim reimbursement of actual travel expenses through and in accordance with regulations established by the Ministry of Finance.

SPEAKER-AUTHORIZED TRAVEL

Members travelling with the prior authorization of the Speaker in connection with specific duties, such as attendance at Commonwealth Parliamentary Association functions, may claim expenses as follows:

1. Use of a private motor vehicle
   (a) Distance allowance: $0.42 per kilometre effective April 1, 2001; or as approved by LAMC.
   (b) Parking charges.
2. Use of a rental motor vehicle
   (a) Actual rental and operational costs, including gas.
   (b) Parking charges.
3. Actual transportation expenses — e.g., air, train, boat, bus and taxi fares.
4. Actual charges for telephone calls, cables, telegrams.
5. Actual accommodation expenses.
6. (a) A per diem allowance of $51.50, or $25.75 per half-day effective April 1, 2000 or part thereof, while in Canada, or the same amount in U.S. funds while in the United States of America. This is claimable when travelling both to and from and at the destination and includes payment for meals and miscellaneous out-of-pocket expenses for which receipts are not required (e.g., porters, papers, tips, dry-cleaning, etc.).

(b) Outside Canada and the United States of America, a per diem allowance for meals based on rates established by the Canada Department of External Affairs, plus $20, or 30% of the per diem allowance, whichever is greater, for non-meal-related expenses. Contact the Legislative Comptroller's office for details.

(c) On a member's application, approved by the Speaker, the Legislative Comptroller shall reimburse actual expenses incurred while out of Canada and the United States in place of the allowance set out in section 7(b) upon presentation of receipts, if practical.

(d) Reimbursement of reasonable expenses incurred that relate directly to travel outside Canada, including the costs of visas and passports, inoculations, service fees for travellers' cheques, bottled water, preventive medicine (e.g., malaria tablets), additional dry cleaning and laundry costs, car rental insurance, additional baggage insurance and premiums for additional medical insurance to provide coverage equivalent to that available in the province under the B.C. Medical Plan.

7. (a) Subject to the Speaker's prior approval, in addition to the allowance referred to in item 6, actual meeting, conference, function and staff consultation expenses.

(b) Actual expenses of hospitality and entertainment as approved by the Speaker.

8. (a) The allowances referred to in items 7(a) and (b) are authorized whether expended or not, but all other reimbursements are authorized only for expenditures actually made for which the member has not been, nor will be, reimbursed by any parties.

(b) Except for allowances referred to in items 7(a) and (b), and except for taxi fares and minor sundry travelling expenses, vouchers (e.g., flimsies, receipts, bills, flight coupons, etc.) are required where practical and a description must also be given of the nature and purpose of the expenditure.

9. The allowances and expenses referred to herein are in addition to any salary and indemnity, health, medical insurance and pension plans to which a member is entitled as a Member of the Legislative Assembly.

10. All claims and accounts are to be submitted promptly to the Legislative Comptroller for approval and payment or rejection. Any items at issue or requiring clarification, or any exceptions or additions to allowances or expenses beyond those referred to herein, are to be referred to the Speaker for consideration, modification, final approval, payment or rejection.

11. Where personal and business travel are combined:
    (a) reimbursement is to be based on the lesser of actual transportation expenses or the most economical transportation expenses that would have been incurred had personal travel not taken place, and;
    (b) per diem allowances will not be paid and expenses incurred will not be reimbursed except to the extent that they would have been paid or reimbursed had the personal travel not taken place.

12. A personal attendant required to travel with a physically disabled member in the discharge of duties assigned by the Speaker may have their expenses reimbursed. Specifically, a personal attendant will be reimbursed for travel expenses (transportation, meals, accommodation and out-of-pocket expenses) not to exceed those set out by the Legislative Assembly Management Committee. The spouse of a physically disabled member may be considered as a personal attendant.

13. Spousal travel (economy class) and expenses may be authorized by the Speaker.

MEMBERS' BENEFITS

The following are brief descriptions of the benefit plans available to Members of the Legislative Assembly. For additional information or clarification, inquiries should be made to the office of the Legislative Comptroller (356-8586).

MLA GROUP REGISTERED RETIREMENT SAVINGS PLAN

An optional MLA Group Registered Retirement Savings Plan has been implemented with Standard Life Assurance Company of Canada as the carrier.

The Legislative Assembly contributes, bi-weekly, direct to Standard Life, 9% of the Members Basic Compensation. Members may also contribute through payroll deduction, up to 9% of their Basic compensation. Members can dispose of their individual account in the Group RRSP when they cease to be Members, including transfers to another plan.

CANADA PENSION PLAN

Members must contribute to the Canada Pension Plan. Premiums are deducted from their bi-weekly payroll cheques. Members who are receiving Canada Pension are responsible for providing documentation to the payroll office for exemption.

MEDICAL PLAN

Participation in the Medical Services Plan of British Columbia is optional and effective the first day of the month following application. This is a 100% employer-paid "taxable benefit".

EXTENDED HEALTH CARE PLAN AND DENTAL PLAN

An extended health care plan and dental plan is available to Members of the Legislative Assembly after serving six full months as a member. The government pays

100% of the cost of these plans. Effective April 1, 2000, the dental plan covers 100% under Part A, 65% under Part B, and 55% under Part C, which is orthodontic. Part C does not apply until a member has been registered under the dental plan for at least 12 consecutive months. It also has a lifetime maximum of $3,500.00 per patient. The extended health care plan covers prescription drugs, eyeglasses, emergency ambulance service, private nursing, etc. Certain deductibles and maximums may apply. For further details contact the Legislative Comptroller (356-8586).

Details on extended health and dental coverage can be seen at the following intranet site:

http://gww.pserc.gov.bc.ca.

GROUP LIFE INSURANCE PLAN

Every Member of the Legislative Assembly is required to participate in the group life insurance plan. Coverage is based on three times the amount of the basic compensation and special allowances.

The government pays the premium for the first $80,000, with the member paying the premium ($0.17 per $1,000 per month) for coverage above $80,000. The federal *Income Tax Act* requires that premiums paid by the government be treated as a taxable benefit. This means the taxable benefit will be $13.60 per month. Coverage is effective the first day a member is elected and will terminate at the end of the month that a member ceases to be a member.

The optional dependant group life provides coverage payable to the member upon death of a spouse and/or dependant child(ren). The premium is $2.00 per month regardless of the number of dependants. Full coverage details can be obtained from the "Member's Benefit Guide".

TRANSITIONAL ASSISTANCE

Transitional assistance is available to members who meet certain conditions. For further details contact the Legislative Comptroller at 356-8586.

COMPUTER SYSTEMS

Help Desk	**250 356-1655**
Fax	**250 387-2348**
E-Mail	**helpdesk@leg.bc.ca**

SERVICES TO MEMBERS

Computer Systems is charged with supporting computer equipment used within the Precinct and equipment supplied to the constituency offices.

The Computer Systems Help Desk is staffed from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday to Friday. When the House is in session, Help Desk staff can be contacted up to two hours after the House adjourns by leaving a message on the Help Desk phone and marking the message as urgent (#12).

Computer Systems also offers the following services to Members and their staff.

- Assistance in selecting new hardware and software
- Assistance with purchasing if the purchase is being made with constituency office funds
- Configuring new hardware and software

LEGISLATIVE LIBRARY

Inquiries and reference services	**250 387-6510**
Fax	**250 356-1373**
E-mail	**llbc.ref@leg.bc.ca**

SERVICES TO MEMBERS

The library provides information services for Members of the Legislative Assembly, their research staffs, the officers of the House and legislative support staff. Provided there is no conflict with the needs of core users, its resources are made available to staff of the provincial government.

Service to MLAs is always paramount. While library staff will endeavour to give assistance to others, a direct request from a member will take precedence.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Each request for information is treated in strictest confidence and with impartiality and objectivity. The library will not disclose any details about borrowing transactions or research requests.

LEGISLATIVE LIBRARY WEB SITE

The Library maintains a local website which provides access to key parliamentary, governmental, legal, corporate, media and general reference sites. Users can connect to the library home page through the Legislative Assembly's internal home page at: www.legis.gov.bc.ca.

INTERLIBRARY LOAN

Library staff will borrow materials from other institutions to fill requests for items not owned by the library.

DUPLICATION SERVICES

Magazine articles, excerpts from books and non-circulating items such as newspapers can be photocopied. Photocopies can also be made from microfilm, microfiche and CD-Rom.

STUDENT USE

Arrangements are made through the University of Victoria's McPherson Library to ensure that university students who have a legitimate need to use the library's facilities are given access to the collection.

FINDING INFORMATION IN THE COLLECTION

The On-line catalogue

The Dynix Automated library catalogue is the Library's database of current books, periodicals, newspaper articles and government publications. It is made up of three sections:

- Books and Government Publications
- British Columbia Newspaper Index
- British Columbia Periodical Index

Other Catalogues and Indexes

The on-line catalogue does not replace earlier catalogues and indexes. To find older materials, it will be necessary to use other sources such as:

- The Card Catalogue
- The Government Publications Card Index
- The British Columbia Newspaper Card Index
- The British Columbia Periodical Card Index

LIBRARY PUBLICATIONS

Library staff produces a number of information aids to give members and their researchers easy access to public policy information and publications new to the Library. These include:

Current Issues: A monthly list of books, articles, electronic documents and web sites on key issues relevant to British Columbia legislators.

Community News Update: News stories and editorials from British Columbia regional newspapers of interest to MLAs and their staffs. The publication is delivered to Members' offices each Monday.

New . . . Books, Articles, Periodicals, CDs etc., . . .: A select list of the important books, reports and magazine articles recently added to the Library's collection. Issued monthly.

British Columbia Government Publications Checklist: A bibliography of British Columbia government publications received by the Library in the previous month, is compiled for the public's information. The checklist is available electronically on the library's web site at: www.llbc.leg.bc.ca

BORROWING MATERIAL FROM THE LIBRARY

Members and their staff may borrow most library material for up to three weeks. Loans are on a "first come, first served" basis. All materials are subject to immediate recall if requested by another member.

Renewals can be made if no other requests for the borrowed items have been received.

LIBRARY HOURS AND ACCESS

During sittings of the Legislative Assembly the library is open to members and legislative staffs only. Under special circumstances, arrangements for use by other researchers may be made through the Director of the Library (telephone: 387-6500).

- — Sessional Hours: 8:30 a.m., until adjournment.
- — Evening Sittings: One hour before the House sits, until adjournment.
- — Non-Sessional Hours: 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday to Friday.

LEGISLATIVE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The Legislative Internship Program was established in January 1976. It was patterned after the Parliamentary Internship Program which was introduced in the House of Commons of Canada in 1970, taking into account the shorter parliamentary sessions in the British Columbia Legislature. Other provincial legislatures have established similar programs.

The program objectives are to offer university graduates who have an interest in public affairs an opportunity to observe the legislative process at first hand and to provide members of the assembly with additional assistance during the parliamentary session.

The program competition is open to all graduates from a British Columbia university. Applicants are selected on the basis of their academic standing, references, maturity, non-partisanship and ability to assist members.

The program begins with an orientation, followed by a six-week attachment to a government ministry and a further four-month assignment to a party caucus. Interns are assigned to work in a particular party caucus, and the

caucuses themselves decide which members will receive the services of an intern. Interns receive a stipend for this six-month period. The program is managed by the Public Education and Outreach Office and the Academic Director from the University of British Columbia.

PUBLIC EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

The Legislative Assembly has developed a series of public educational tools to promote a better understanding of the parliamentary system. Members may use the following resources to communicate with their constituents and visiting students about the responsibilities of MLAs and the role, purpose and activities of the Legislative Assembly:

1. A series of brochures:
   - Welcome to the House
   - The Speaker of the house
   - Members of the Legislative Assembly
   - How a Bill Becomes Law
   - The Committees of the House
   - Question Period
   - The Role of Government and Opposition
2. A bookmark featuring basic facts about the legislative process.
3. Complementing these public education resources, work is progressing on a video about the Legislative Assembly, an interactive CD-ROM, as well as an enhancement of the Legislative Assembly website.

Please contact **Karen Aitken, Coordinator of Public Education and Outreach (387-8669)** for further information about these public education resources.

COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) is an association of Commonwealth parliamentarians which provides a means of regular communication among members of Commonwealth parliaments. The Association seeks to foster understanding and cooperation amongst parliamentarians and to promote the study of and respect for parliamentary institutions.

The CPA was founded in 1911 and is composed of branches formed in legislatures in Commonwealth countries. Branches are grouped geographically into eight regions, of which Canada forms one distinct region. An executive committee, composed of the officers of the Association and representatives from each of the regions, is vested with the control and management of the activities and business of the CPA. A secretariat, located in London, manages the day-to-day affairs of the Association. The Association is financed by membership fees paid annually by each branch.

There are 13 autonomous branches in the Canadian region of the CPA, British Columbia being one of those branches. The president of the branch is the Speaker, and all members of the assembly are members of the Association. The Clerk of the House is the secretary of the British Columbia branch.

A regional council is responsible for the management of the activities and business of the Canadian region. Currently, the Clerk of the Senate acts as executive secretary and treasurer to the Canadian region. The general operating expenses of the Canadian region are financed by an annual levy paid by each of the branches.

Each year, a regional conference is hosted by one of the Canadian branches. The agenda for this conference is devoted to matters of current political interest to members from across the country. In the fall, a regional seminar on parliamentary practice is hosted by a branch.

The Canadian region also sponsors seminars on topical matters, to which the British Columbia branch sends a delegation. The B.C. Branch encourages Members and Officers to attend these Regional Conferences and Seminars.

The region supports the publication of the Canadian Parliamentary Review, which contains articles on subjects of parliamentary interest, Speakers' rulings, information on elections, appointments, retirements and deaths, and reports on the activities of each of the branches. The British Columbia branch contributes articles, reports and other information on a regular basis. Members are encouraged to provide articles for the Review.

The headquarters secretariat in London publishes The Parliamentarian, which contains articles from legislatures and information on parliamentary activities throughout the Commonwealth. (Both The Parliamentarian and the Canadian Parliamentary Review are distributed free of charge on a quarterly basis to all members of the British Columbia Legislature.)

Representatives from all the CPA branches meet annually in a Commonwealth country to debate significant parliamentary matters and topics of immediate concern to the Commonwealth and to the world.

The Office of the Clerk will provide letters of introduction to any member of the assembly travelling to a Commonwealth country.

STATUTORY OFFICERS

AUDITOR GENERAL

The Auditor General of British Columbia serves the Legislative Assembly and the people of British Columbia by providing independent assessments and advice that enhance government accountability and performance. The core activities of the Office have the following objectives:

— audit and report on the fairness and reliability of the accountability information provided by government on its performance to the Legislative Assembly;
— audit and report directly on aspects of government performance that are of importance to legislators and the public, for which government does not provide accountability information;
— support the development and implementation of principles for government use in reporting accountability information to the Legislative Assembly and the public; and
— advise on specific ways to improve government accountability practices and performance.

The Office assesses and provides advice with respect to the three key elements of government accountability and performance.

Financial — The Auditor General provides the Assembly with independent, professional opinions on whether the financial statements prepared by the government and its related organizations are fairly presented. Reports are also provided to the Legislative Assembly on the adequacy of financial controls and financial management.

Operational — The Auditor General carries out performance audits that provide the Legislative Assembly with independent assessments about whether the programs of government and its related organizations are implemented and administered economically, efficiently and cost-effectively. These audits also assess whether members of the Assembly and the public are provided with fair, reliable accountability information with respect to performance.

Conduct of business — The Auditor General carries out compliance audits that provide the Legislative Assembly with independent assessments as to whether government and its related organizations comply with legislation and related authorities governing their administrative, financial and regulatory activities, and whether they meet the standards established for the conduct of public business.

Whenever possible, the Auditor General's assessments focus on the fairness and reliability of the accountability information provided by government and its related organizations with respect to their performance. Where government and its related organizations have not provided accountability information publicly, the Auditor General gathers the necessary information in order to assess performance directly.

During the course of this work the Auditor General identifies and advises on ways to improve government accountability and performance.

Auditor General reports are tabled in the Legislative Assembly. They are referred to one of the Assembly's standing committees, most often to the Public Accounts Committee, for deliberation. The committees analyze and debate the reports and make recommendations. The authority to implement the recommendations remains with the Legislative Assembly or the government.

As an officer of the Legislature, the Auditor General is appointed on the recommendation of the Legislative Assembly and is therefore independent of the government and in a position to make impartial assessments of government accountability and performance.

To fulfil the role, the Auditor General has established a professional office dedicated to public sector accountability and auditing and committed to the principles of objectivity, integrity, due care and service to the public.

Office of the Auditor General
Location: 8 Bastion Square
Victoria, British Columbia V8V 1X4
Telephone: 250 387-6803
1 800 663-7867 (toll-free through Enquiry BC)
604 660-2421 (Vancouver)
Facsimile: 250 387-1230
E-mail: comments@bc.auditor.com
Website: Further information and reports at:
http://www.bcauditor.com
Office Hours:
Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER

The *Election Act* came into force on September 1, 1995, creating a new role for the Chief Electoral Officer as an officer of the Legislature. As an independent officer, the Chief Electoral Officer makes rulings, creates regulations and exercises the responsibilities of the position in a non-partisan manner, ensuring the fairness, openness and impartiality of the electoral process. To emphasize the need for the impartiality of the position, the Chief Electoral Officer cannot be a member of any political party, make contributions to a party or candidate, or vote in a provincial election.

The mandate of the Chief Electoral Officer, through the non-partisan agency Elections British Columbia, is to serve the people of British Columbia by:

- providing guidance and supervision respecting voter registration and the conduct of elections, referendums and plebiscites;
- developing and delivering public information programs on electoral processes; and
- preparing financial directives and guidelines for political parties, constituency associations, candidates, leadership contestants and election advertising sponsors.

Under the *Election Act*, an Election Advisory Committee has been created, and is chaired by the Chief Electoral Officer. The committee's membership is derived from registered political parties represented in the Legislative Assembly. The role of the committee is to advise the Chief Electoral Officer on matters regarding electoral financing, legislative amendments, Regulations, and the cancellation of enumerations.

In keeping with the spirit of a fair and open electoral system, the Chief Electoral Officer has the authority to:

- conduct periodic investigations and audits of the financial affairs of those organizations and individuals who register under the financing provisions of the Act;

— conduct investigations of any matter that may constitute a contravention of the Act;
— make exceptions to the Act because of an emergency, a mistake or extraordinary circumstances;
— seek injunctions to prevent contravention of or to require compliance with the Act;
— test new election procedures in by-elections, notwithstanding that they conflict with the provisions of the Act;
— make all Regulations required under the Act.

The Chief Electoral Officer reports annually to the Legislative Assembly through the Speaker on the activities of Elections BC. Special reports are also required regarding the proceedings, results and costs of each electoral event; for any recommendations respecting amendments to the *Election Act* or other enactment affecting election matters; and when a member ceases to hold office because of failure to comply with certain election financing provisions of the Act.

Elections British Columbia
Mail: PO Box 9275 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, British Columbia V8W 9J6
Location:1075 Pendergast Street
Victoria, British Columbia
Telephone: 250 387-5305
Toll-free: 1 800 661-8683
Facsimile: 250 387-3578
E-mail: electionsbc@gems3.gov.bc.ca
Website: http://www.elections.bc.ca

CHILD, YOUTH AND FAMILY ADVOCATE

The Child, Youth and Family Advocate operates under the *Child, Youth and Family Advocacy Act* to ensure that the rights and interests of children, youths and their families are protected and advanced. Under the Act, the Advocate is responsible for assisting children and youth in accessing government services, for ensuring that children and youth have access to appropriate appeal and

review processes for providing information and advice to government and communities about the adequacy of services for children and youth, and for supporting the development of local advocacy in communities around the province.

As an Officer of the Legislature, the Advocate operates independently of all government ministries and reports annually to the Legislature. Where the Child, Youth and Family Advocate considers it appropriate, the Advocate may also make special reports to the Legislature on issues affecting children and youth.

Request for advocacy services can be directed to:

Office of the Child, Youth and Family Advocate
Address: Box 6, Suite 600, 595 Howe Street
Vancouver, British Columbia V6C 2T5
Telephone: 604 775-3203 (inside lower mainland)
Toll-free: 1 800 476-3933 (outside lower mainland)
Facsimile: 604 775-3205
TTY: 604 775-6380

CONFLICT OF INTEREST COMMISSIONER

The *Members' Conflict of Interest Act*, which came into effect December 21, 1990, provides a statutory framework for:

- defining standards of official conduct for Members of the Legislative Assembly;
- providing mechanisms for the early identification and resolution of potential conflicts of interest;
- investigating alleged conflicts of interest;
- publicly disclosing the financial interests of Members of the Legislative Assembly.

The cornerstone of the *Members' Conflict of Interest Act* is the appointment of a Commissioner who is an independent officer of the Legislative Assembly.

The Commissioner performs three separate but related roles:

First, the Commissioner acts as an adviser to members. MLAs need to know what their obligations are and that the steps they have taken will fulfil those obligations.

Secondly, the Commissioner meets with each member at least annually to review the disclosure of the member's interests and general obligations imposed by the Act.

The third role of the Commissioner is to undertake inquiries into alleged contraventions of the Act.

The Commissioner may provide written Opinions on application by any individual member, or by Executive Council, or by the Legislative Assembly, or by any member of the public and may at the request of the Lieutenant Governor in Council, or of the Legislative Assembly undertake such special assignments as the Commissioner considers appropriate.

Disclosure statements and additional information can be obtained from:

Conflict of Interest Commissioner
Address: Suite 101, 431 Menzies Street
Victoria, British Columbia V8V 1X4
Telephone: 250 356-9283
Facsimile: 250 356-6580
e-mail: conflictofinterest@gems4.gov.bc.ca
Website: http://www.gov.bc.ca/oci

INFORMATION AND PRIVACY COMMISSIONER

The Information and Privacy Commissioner of British Columbia was appointed pursuant to the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, R.S.B.C. 1996, c. 165, which the Legislative Assembly passed unanimously in 1992. The first Commissioner was appointed and the office was opened in Victoria in the fall of 1993. The current Commissioner was appointed in August 1999.

Scope of Authority

The Commissioner has a continuing responsibility to ensure that ministries, Crown corporations, boards, agencies, commissions, local government bodies, and

self-governing professional bodies comply with the letter and spirit of the Act. In broad terms, the Commissioner has the authority to:

- monitor compliance with the access to information and privacy provisions of the Act;
- inform the public about the Act;
- investigate privacy complaints and consider appeals from decisions made by public bodies on requests for records under the Act.

The *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and the powers of the Commissioner do not extend to the records of a member of the Legislative Assembly that are not in the custody or control of a public body.

Officer of the Legislature

The Information and Privacy Commissioner is appointed by the Lieutenant Governor on the unanimous recommendation of the Legislature and of the Legislative Assembly, for a non-renewable term of six years. The Commissioner is an officer not of the government but of the Legislative Assembly, and is non-partisan. The Commissioner reports annually on the activities of the Commissioner's office to the Legislative Assembly.

Powers of the Information and Privacy Commissioner

The Information and Privacy Commissioner is responsible for monitoring how the Act is administered to ensure that its purposes are achieved. The Commissioner has sole jurisdiction to investigate, audit or hear appeals on matters of privacy protection and freedom of information that are covered by the Act. The Commissioner has very broad powers and authority to issue binding orders with respect of the access to information decisions and privacy practices of public bodies.

Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner
Mail: 1675 Douglas Street, Fourth Floor
Victoria, British Columbia V8V 1X4
Telephone: 250 387-5629
604 660-2421 (in Vancouver)
Facsimile: 250 387-1696
e-mail: info@oipcbc.org
Website: http://www.oipcbc.org

OMBUDSMAN

The *Ombudsman Act*, R.S.B.C. 1979, c. 306, was passed unanimously by the Legislative Assembly in 1977. The first Ombudsman was appointed in 1979, and offices in Victoria and Vancouver were opened on October 1, 1979. There have been five Ombudsmans appointed to date.

Scope of Authority

The Ombudsman can investigate issues that are drawn to the office's attention by members of the public or that are referred to him or her by the Legislative Assembly or any of its committees. The Ombudsman can also investigate on his or her own initiative. The Ombudsman's jurisdiction is as follows:

1. Ministries of the government.
2. A person, corporation, commission, board, bureau or authority who is or the majority of the members of which are, or the majority of the members of the board of management or board of directors of which are,
   (a) appointed by an Act, minister, the Lieutenant Governor in Council;
   (b) in the discharge of their duties, public officers or servants of British Columbia, or
   (c) responsible to the government.
3. A corporation the ownership of which or a majority of the shares of which is vested in the government.

4. Municipalities.
5. Regional Districts.
6. The Islands Trust established under the *Islands Trust Act*.
7. Improvement districts as defined in the *Municipal Act*.
8. The Capital Improvement District under the *Capital Commission Act*.
9. Boards, committees, commissions or similar bodies established under the *Municipal Act* or *Vancouver Charter*.
10. The Resort Municipality of Whistler and the Whistler Resort Association.
11. A local trust committee, the Trust Council, the Trust Fund Board and the executive committee and persons to whom their powers are delegated under the *Islands Trust Act*.
12. Library boards as defined in the *Library Act*.
13. Regional parks boards established under the *Parks (Regional) Act* and the Cultus Lake Park Board.
14. A greater board as defined in section 872 of the *Municipal Act*.
15. Development districts, water users' communities, comptroller and regional water manager under the *Water Act*.
16. The commissioners of a district defined in section 58 of the *Drainage, Ditch and Dike Act* and an engineer, commissioner, inspector of dikes or land settlement board acting under that Act.
17. The British Columbia Diking Authority and a diking authority under the *Dike Maintenance Act*.
18. The Okanagan Kootenay Sterile Insect Release Board.
19. Regional transit commissions established under the *British Columbia Transit Act*.
20. A corporation

(a) more than 50% of the issued voting shares of which are owned by one or more of the authorities listed in sections 4 to 19 or this section, or

(b) that is controlled by one or more of the authorities listed in sections 4 to 19 and, for the purposes of ascertaining control, a corporation is controlled by one or more of these authorities if a majority of the members of the corporation or of its board of directors or board of management consists of either or both of the following:

(i) persons appointed as members by the authorities;

(ii) officers or employees of an authority acting as such.

21. Schools and boards as defined in the *School Act.*

21.1 Francophone education authorities defined in the *School Act* and francophone schools operated by francophone education authorities.

22. Universities as defined in the *University Act.*

23. The University of Northern British Columbia.

24. Royal Roads University.

25. Institutions as defined in the *College and Institute Act.*

26. Hospitals and boards of management of hospitals as defined in the *Hospital Act.*

27. Governing bodies of professional and occupational associations that are established or continued by an Act.

28. Regional Health Boards and Community Health Councils established under the *Health Authorities Act.*

29. Regional Hospital Districts under the *Hospital District Act.*

30. The Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority established under the *Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority Act.*

31. The Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority established under the *Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority Act.*

Investigations, according to the *Ombudsman Act,* are ". . . with respect to a matter of administration. . . ." This jurisdiction was interpreted in 1984 by the Supreme Court of Canada which held that ". . . the phrase 'a matter of administration' encompasses everything done by governmental authorities in the formulation and implementation of government policy." The judgment excluded from the Ombudsman's scrutiny ". . . only the activities of the Legislature and the courts. . . ."

Officer of Legislature

The Ombudsman, recommended unanimously by a special committee of the Legislative Assembly and appointed by the Lieutenant Governor on the recommendation of the Legislative Assembly, is a statutory officer of the Legislature. He/she is non-partisan and neutral and does not work for the government. The office reports and acts as a resource to the Legislature as a whole.

Powers of Ombudsman

According to the Act, the Ombudsman and his or her delegates have extensive powers to receive and obtain information in any manner considered appropriate, to examine documents, to conduct hearings, to examine on oath and to consider any information, whether or not admissible in a court. The Act guarantees that investigations are conducted in private, unless special circumstances make public knowledge essential to further an investigation, to promote administrative fairness or in the public interest.

While conducting an investigation, the Ombudsman measures the conduct of a ministry or other authority against a code of administrative fairness provided in Section 23 of the *Ombudsman Act.* For example, admin-

istrative action must not be contrary to law or unjust, oppressive, or improperly discriminatory; it must not be made, done or omitted pursuant to a statutory provision or other rule of law or practice that is unjust, oppressive or improperly discriminatory; it must not be based on a mistake of law or fact or on irrelevant grounds or consideration; acts or decisions must not be made for improper purposes; adequate and appropriate reasons have to be given; unreasonable delays must not occur. If the Ombudsman finds that any of the above provisions were infringed upon, he/she can make certain recommendations. The Ombudsman can recommend that a decision or other matter be reconsidered, that an act be remedied, that an omission or delay be rectified or that a decision be cancelled or varied; and can further recommend that reasons be given or that a practice, procedure or course of conduct be altered. The Act also permits the Ombudsman to recommend that an enactment or other rule of law be reconsidered.

Recommendations

It is important to note that the Ombudsman's authority is confined to the making of recommendations and therefore depends on the power of reason and persuasion. After an investigation, if a complaint is substantiated, he/she can recommend to the authority how to rectify the law, policy, procedure or practice to be fair.

The Ombudsman's office receives approximately 12,000 inquiries and complaints annually. The office is able to resolve the majority of matters it investigates. Very often a decision or action called into question is determined to be fair.

The Ombudsman must report on the activities of the Ombudsman's Office annually to the Legislative Assembly. Where the Ombudsman considers it in the public interest or in the interest of a person or authority, the Ombudsman may also make public or special reports to the Legislative Assembly or comment publicly.

The address and phone number of the Ombudsman offices are:

Victoria:
Address: PO Box 9039 Stn Prov Govt
931 Fort Street
Victoria, British Columbia V8W 9A5
Telephone: 250 387-5855
1 800 567-3247 (Toll free)
1 800 667-1303 (TDD)
Facsimile: 250 387-0198
Internet: www.ombudsman.bc.ca

Vancouver:
Address: 200, 1111 Melville Street
Vancouver, British Columbia V6E 3V6
Telephone: 250 387-5855
1 800 567-3247 (toll-free)
604 660-1895 (TDD/TTY)
1 800 667-1303 (TDD/TTY toll-free)
Facsimile: 604 660-1691
Internet: www.ombudsman.bc.ca

POLICE COMPLAINT COMMISSIONER

The Police Complaint Commissioner is an independent officer of the Legislature appointed under recent changes to the *Police Act*. The amendments to the *Police Act* were proclaimed July 1, 1998. The Act sets out, in detail, a new process by which the public can make complaints against municipal police departments. The Commissioner is broadly responsible for overseeing that process. He or she may receive complaints from any source, and is required to maintain a record of complaints and their disposition. The Commissioner does not make findings on the validity of complaints, but monitors the manner in which police departments investigate and conclude complaints made against them.

The Commissioner may order investigations, oversee mediation between the complainant and the police

department, and refer serious matters to Crown Counsel for prosecution. The Commissioner has the power to order a public hearing on a matter affecting the public interest.

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LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL

The function of the Office of the Legislative Counsel is to prepare all government bills for presentation to the Legislative Assembly for their consideration. The office consists of the Chief Legislative Counsel and, currently, eleven other lawyers, four legislation editors and the Registrar of Regulations, together with the necessary support staff.

After a legislative initiative has been approved by Cabinet, lawyers in the Office of the Legislative Counsel meet with senior officials in the appropriate ministry to translate the policy behind a legislative proposal into legally appropriate language in the form of a bill to be introduced in the Legislative Assembly. During the course of preparation of a bill, the drafters endeavour to draft it in clear language that is free from ambiguity.

During the course of a session of the Legislative Assembly, the Legislative Counsel Office is required to interact with Cabinet through its Committee on Legislation and with the Office of the Clerk on matters of mutual concern. Legislative Counsel prepares House amendments and, when appropriate, attends in the House to advise ministers on technical and legal questions.

The Office of the Legislative Counsel also prepares the bound volume of the annual statutes, as well as preparing the looseleaf consolidation of the current statutes as they have been amended over time.

Since 1992, Legislative Counsel has worked with the Queen's Printer and the Law Clerk to provide electronic access to the bills and statutes. Bills before the Legislative Assembly are available on the Legislative Assembly's World Wide Web site, located at the following Internet address:

http://www.legis.gov.bc.ca/

The Consolidated Statutes (similar to the looseleaf service) are available from the Queen's Printer on CD-ROM in a searchable electronic format.

In addition, all government regulations and orders-in-council are drafted in the Office of the Legislative Counsel and reviewed as to statutory authority. Through the Registrar of Regulations, records are kept of all regulations and a looseleaf service is provided to keep the regulations current. The Consolidated Regulations are also available from Queen's Printer on CD-ROM.

Electronic consolidations of both statutes and regulations are now available on a subscription basis at the following Internet address:

http:// www.qplegaleze.ca

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APPENDIX I

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Long, Harold (Lib) (Powell River-Sunshine Coast)

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Constit.: 4595 Marine Avenue
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MacKay, Dennis (Lib) (Bulkley Valley-Stikine)

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Manhas, Karn (Lib) (Port Coquitlam-Burke Mountain)

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Murray, Hon. Joyce (Lib) (New Westminster)
Minister of Water, Land and Air Protection

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Nebbeling, Hon. Ted (Lib) (West Vancouver-Garibaldi)
Minister of State for Community Charter

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Victoria V8V 1X4 ..... 250 387-2283
Fax: 250 356-8508

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West Vancouver V7V 1K4 ..... 604 981-0045
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Nettleton, Paul (Lib) (Prince George-Omineca)

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Fax: 250 387-9103

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Prince George V2N 5E1 ..... 250 964-5650
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Neufeld, Hon. Richard (Lib) (Peace River North)
Minister of Energy and Mines

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Nijjar, Rob (Lib) (Vancouver-Kingsway)

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Orr, Sheila (Lib) (Victoria-Hillside)

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Penner, Barry (Lib) (Chilliwack-Kent)

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Plant, Hon. Geoff (Lib) (Richmond-Steveston)
Attorney General and Minister Responsible for Treaty Negotiations

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Victoria V8V 1X4 ..... 250 387-1866
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Reid, Hon. Judith (Lib) (Nanaimo-Parksville)
Minister of Transportation

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Reid, Hon. Linda (Lib) (Richmond East)
Minister of State for Early Childhood Development

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Richmond, Hon. Claude (Lib) (Kamloops)
Speaker

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Roddick, Valerie (Lib) (Delta South)

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Santori, Hon. Armando (Sandy) (Lib) (West Kootenay-Boundary)
Minister of Management Services

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Stephens, Hon. Lynn (Lib) (Langley)
Minister of State for Women's Equality

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Suffredine, Blair (Lib) (Nelson-Creston)

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Sultan, Ralph (Lib) (West Vancouver-Capilano)

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Thorpe, Hon. Rick (Lib) (Okanagan-Westside)
Minister of Competition, Science and Enterprise

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Fax: 250 356-6376

Constit.: 10122B Main Street
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Summerland V0H 1Z0 ..... 250 404-3008
Fax: 250 404-3011

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Trumper, Gillian (Lib) (Alberni-Qualicum)

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van Dongen, Hon. John (Lib) (Abbotsford-Clayburn)
Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries

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Visser, Rod (Lib) (North Island)

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Weisbeck, Dr. John (Lib) (Kelowna-Lake Country)

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Whittred, Hon. Katherine (Lib) (North Vancouver-Lonsdale)
Minister of State for Intermediate, Long Term and Home Care

Office: 342, Parliament Buildings
Victoria V8V 1X4 ..... 250 356-7549
Fax: 250 356-8264

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North Vancouver V7L 2P9 ..... 604 981-0033
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Wilson, Dr. John (Lib) (Cariboo North)

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Quesnel V2J 5A3 ..... 250 992-7747
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Wong, Patrick (Lib) (Vancouver-Kensington)

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APPENDIX II

Alphabetical List of Constituencies

Abbotsford-Clayburn	van Dongen, Hon. John	(LIB)
Abbotsford-Mount Lehman	de Jong, Hon. Michael	(LIB)
Alberni-Qualicum	Trumper, Gillian	(LIB)
Bulkley Valley-Stikine	MacKay, Dennis	(LIB)
Burnaby North	Lee, Richard T.	(LIB)
Burnaby-Edmonds	Sahota, Patty	(LIB)
Burnaby-Willingdon	Nuraney, John	(LIB)
Burquitlam	Bloy, Harry	(LIB)
Cariboo North	Wilson, John D.	(LIB)
Cariboo South	Cobb, Walter	(LIB)
Chilliwack-Kent	Penner, Barry	(LIB)
Chilliwack-Sumas	Les, John	(LIB)
Columbia River-Revelstoke	McMahon, Wendy	(LIB)
Comox Valley	Hagen, Hon. Stan	(LIB)
Coquitlam-Maillardville	Stewart, Richard	(LIB)
Cowichan-Ladysmith	Bruce, Hon. Graham P.	(LIB)
Delta North	Masi, Reni	(LIB)
Delta South	Roddick, Valerie	(LIB)
East Kootenay	Bennett, Bill	(LIB)
Esquimalt-Metchosin	Hamilton, Arnie	(LIB)
Fort Langley-Aldergrove	Coleman, Hon. Rich	(LIB)
Kamloops	Richmond, Hon. Claude	(LIB)
Kamloops-North Thompson	Krueger, Kevin	(LIB)
Kelowna-Lake Country	Weisbeck, John	(LIB)
Kelowna-Mission	Hawkins, Hon. Sindi	(LIB)
Langley	Stephens, Hon. Lynn	(LIB)
Malahat-Juan de Fuca	Kerr, Brian J.	(LIB)
Maple Ridge-Mission	Hawes, Randy	(LIB)
Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows	Stewart, Ken	(LIB)
Nanaimo	Hunter, Mike	(LIB)
Nanaimo-Parksville	Reid, Hon. Judith	(LIB)
Nelson-Creston	Suffredine, Blair F.	(LIB)
New Westminster	Murray, Hon. Joyce	(LIB)
North Coast	Belsey, Bill	(LIB)
North Island	Visser, Rod	(LIB)
North Vancouver-Lonsdale	Whittred, Hon. Katherine	(LIB)
North Vancouver-Seymour	Jarvis, Daniel	(LIB)
Oak Bay-Gordon Head	Chong, Ida	(LIB)
Okanagan-Vernon	Christensen, Tom	(LIB)
Okanagan-Westside	Thorpe, Hon. Rick	(LIB)
Peace River North	Neufeld, Hon. Richard	(LIB)

Peace River South	Lekstrom, Blair	(LIB)
Penticton-Okanagan Valley	Barisoff, Hon. Bill	(LIB)
Port Coquitlam-Burke Mountain	Manhas, Karn	(LIB)
Port Moody-Westwood	Clark, Hon. Christy	(LIB)
Powell River-Sunshine Coast	Long, Harold	(LIB)
Prince George-Mount Robson	Bond, Hon. Shirley	(LIB)
Prince George North	Bell, Pat	(LIB)
Prince George-Omineca	Nettleton, Paul	(LIB)
Richmond Centre	Halsey-Brandt, Hon. Greg	(LIB)
Richmond East	Reid, Hon. Linda	(LIB)
Richmond-Steveston	Plant, Hon. Geoff	(LIB)
Saanich North and the Islands	Coell, Hon. Murray	(LIB)
Saanich South	Brice, Susan	(LIB)
Shuswap	Abbott, Hon. George	(LIB)
Skeena	Harris, Roger	(LIB)
Surrey-Cloverdale	Falcon, Kevin	(LIB)
Surrey-Green Timbers	Locke, Brenda	(LIB)
Surrey-Newton	Bhullar, Tony	(IND LIB)
Surrey-Panorama Ridge	Cheema, Gulzar S.	(LIB)
Surrey-Tynehead	Hayer, David S.	(LIB)
Surrey-Whalley	Brenzinger, Elayne	(LIB)
Surrey-White Rock	Hogg, Hon. Gordon	(LIB)
Vancouver-Burrard	Mayencourt, Lorne	(LIB)
Vancouver-Fairview	Collins, Hon. Gary	(LIB)
Vancouver-Fraserview	Johnston, Ken	(LIB)
Vancouver-Hastings	MacPhail, Joy	(NDP)
Vancouver-Kensington	Wong, Patrick	(LIB)
Vancouver-Kingsway	Nijjar, Rob	(LIB)
Vancouver-Langara	Anderson, Val J.	(LIB)
Vancouver-Mount Pleasant	Kwan, Jenny Wai Ching	(NDP)
Vancouver-Point Grey	Campbell, Hon. Gordon	(LIB)
Vancouver-Quilchena	Hansen, Hon. Colin	(LIB)
Victoria-Beacon Hill	Bray, Jeff	(LIB)
Victoria-Hillside	Orr, Sheila	(LIB)
West Kootenay-Boundary	Santori, Hon. Armando (Sandy)	(LIB)
West Vancouver-Capilano	Sultan, Ralph	(LIB)
West Vancouver-Garibaldi	Nebbeling, Hon. Ted	(LIB)
Yale-Lillooet	Chutter, Dave	(LIB)

Current Standings:

Liberal Party	76 seats
Independent Liberal	1 seat
New Democratic Party	2 seats
Total	79 seats

APPENDIX III

Suggested Reading

The following is a select list of material which may be of interest:

Books

1. *Parliamentary Practice in British Columbia*, 3rd ed. [by] George MacMinn, Q.C. Queen's Printer, Victoria, 1997. 376 pp.
2. *Parliamentary Practice* [by] Sir Erskine May. Butterworths, London, England, 22nd ed. 1998. 1095 pp.
3. *Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms*, 6th ed. 1989. 451 pp.
4. *Electoral History of British Columbia* [by] Legislative Library and Elections B.C. 1989. ca. 550 pp.
5. *British Columbia Executive Council Appointments* [by] Legislative Library. 1990. 115 pp.
6. *Royal Commissions and Commissions of Inquiry . . . in British Columbia. 1872–1980.* [by] Legislative Library. 2 vols.

Periodicals

1. *Canadian Parliamentary Review*. Quarterly. (Published by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, Canadian Region.) Ottawa.
2. *The Parliamentarian*. Quarterly. (Published by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, Headquarters Secretariat.) London, England.

APPENDIX IV

MEMBERS' HANDBOOK

REQUEST FOR CHANGE FORM

To:
Clerk of Committees
Legislative Assembly of British Columbia
Room 224
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, B.C. V8V 1X4

Telephone: (250) 356-2933
Fax: (250) 356-8172

Member's name: .....

Page Request

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